We claim :

1. A process for fixed bed sweetening of petroleum distillates using halog nated metal phthalocyanine as a catalyst which comprises; impregnating th catalyst on activated charcoal bed by circulating alcoholic alkaline soluti n of the catalyst through charcoal bed till colourless solution is obtained in th effluent, passing the petroleum distillate through above said catalyst loaded charcoal bed along with air or oxygen at a temperature in the range of 20°C to 100°C and at a pressure in the range of 1 kg/cm^2 to 15kg/cm^2 with a liquid hourly space velocity in the range of 1hr^{-1} to 15hr^{-1} with continuous or intermittent injection of alkali solution such as sodium hydroxid of concentration in the range of 0.5-20%, to obtain the desired low mercaptan level petroleum distillates.

2. A success as claimed in claim 1, wherein the alcoholic alkaline solution us d is selected from methanolic and ethanolic solution of sodium hydroxide.

3. A process as claimed in claim 1-2, wherein halogenated metal phthalocyanin catalyst used is selected from dichloro cobalt phthalocyanine and dibromo cobalt phthalocyanine.

4. A process as claimed in claim 1-3, wherein the concentration of the catalyst used in the fixed bed is in the range of 0.1 wt% to 1 wt% of activated charcoal.

5. A process as claimed in claim 1-4, wherein the halogenated metal phthalocyanine used is prepared as described and claimed in our co-pending application no. NF 260/98.

6. A process as claimed in claim 1-5 wherein the petroleum fraction used is selected from diesel, kerosene and FCC gasoline.

7. A process as claimed in claim 1-6 wherein the temperature is preferably in the range of 20°C to 50°C.

8. A process as claimed in claim1-7 wherein the pressure is preferably in the range of 5kg/cm^2 – 8 kg/cm^2.

9. A process as claimed in claim 1-8 wherein the liquid hourly space velocity (LHSV) is preferably in the range of 1hr^{-1} to 6 hr^{-1}.